

Forest Service Wild Horse and Burro Program



Dr. Teresa Drotar

National Wild Horse and Burro Program Lead

Current Estimates:

Horses: 9000-12,000

Burros: 1000-1400



Latest Developments

- 1) Continue to be underfunded for Wild Horse and Burro Management
- 2) Uneven management from Forest to Forest
- 3) Placement rates in both California and New Mexico facilities near 100%
- 4) In talks to move additional horses from BLM facilities to FS facilities for placement

Latest Developments

5) Held internal FS training for personnel

6) Modifying CAWP to be better fit for FS

Devil's Garden Plateau Wild Horse Territory

Modoc National Forest near Alturas, CA
232,520 acres

Forest Supervisor: Christopher Christopherson

Corral Manager: Charlea Johnston

On-Range WHB Manager: Madelaine Levy



Devil's Garden Plateau Wild Horse Territory

Census Data

| Year | Population |
|------|------------|
| 2016 | 2246 |
| 2021 | 1756 |
| 2022 | 1205 |
| 2023 | 1339 |

Off-Range Double Devil's Garden Wild Horse Corrals

- 1) Placed 296 horses into private homes since December 4, 2023
- 2) Placed all horses from gathers prior to Fall, 2023
- 3) Astounding 99% placement rate!**

Double Devil's Garden Wild Horse Corrals

Research Projects

USDA Wildlife Services:

- 1) Development of reproductive technologies using injectable and mucosal administration
- 2) Assessment of technology for population and congenital disorder management

USGS Research:

- 1) Effects of predation, migration
- 2) Effects of fertility booster intervals and effectiveness

Double Devil's Garden Wild Horse Corrals

Partnerships

Extreme Mustang Makeover: "Mustang Spectacular"

FS Horses from 3 territories featured

June 20-23rd in Franklin, TN

Non-profit network to support adopters

4H Horse Challenge

Bloomfield Wild Horse and Burro Corrals

Northern New Mexico near Jicarilla Wild Horse Territory

District Ranger: Jim Eaton

Corral Manager: Currently Unfilled

Staff Officer: Nick Padilla

Animal Caretaker: Megan Print

Bloomfield Wild Horse and Burro Corrals

Adopted 99% of animals in 2023

Work with a Cooperative for management of horses

Have trained horses for use as pack and saddle stock for the FS

Place horses from the Modoc and other areas

Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Territory

Montana

FS has 10% of the area/horses

BLM is the lead: currently updating NEPA and Territory/HMA plans

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Inyo National Forest

Montgomery Pass Wild Horse Territory: Mono Lake
Comment period for NEPA recently closed

State of California entering request for management of
horses that are off territory

Hope to avoid visible die offs this winter



Ochoco National Forest

Moving forward with plans for Territory Plan

Plans for Wild Horse Adoption Center complete, waiting for funding



FS horses in BLM facilities

**Excess animals gathered from joint management areas go to BLM corrals
Region 4 of FS has large number of JMAs; removals handled by BLM**

Life-time holding all BLM contracted pastures

FS has 1100+ horses assigned to pastures

Costs are for the lifetime of the horse

FS horses are 4 years to 28 years of age in lifetime pastures

FS recently acknowledged bills for horses in BLM care

FS Management aware, discussions going on

Forest Service Wild Horse and Burro Program Funding

Still need consistent funding

Do not anticipate allocation in 2024

Awareness of FS needs in wildlife and range management communities

Searching for creative sources for money

Hope to get acknowledgement in Congress



Goals and Current Strategies

- ❖ **Treat with contraceptives and release back to the Territory**
- ❖ **Plan to continue management to reach AML**
- ❖ **Continue to complete Territory Plans**
- ❖ **Obtain adequate Funding * Important***
- ❖ **Continue to increase public awareness of the definition of Wild horse**
- ❖ **Build and staff facilities to remove pressure on the BLM for FS excess horses**
- ❖ **Continue to develop and nurture partnerships**
- ❖ **Work with BLM to transfer horses back to FS facilities for adoption and reduce the expenditures in the future**

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Managing ecosystems and animals despite challenges for the WHB Program